

REMARKS

Claims 12 and 13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-5, 7-11 and 14-21 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments merely cancel rejected claims; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 12 and 13.

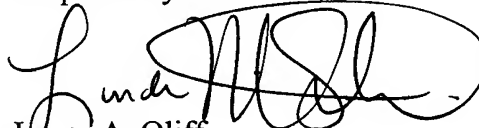
The Office Action rejects claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph; rejects claims 1, 2, 10, 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,184,476 B1 to Okabe et al. (Okabe); rejects claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 11 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,723,822 to Lien (Lien); rejects claims 5 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lien in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,816,323 to Inoue (Inoue); and rejects claims 14, 15 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Okabe.

These rejections are moot as claims 1-5, 7-11 and 14-21 are canceled by this Amendment After Final Rejection. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James A. Oliff", is written over a horizontal line.

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Date: September 26, 2006

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